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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the assessment described in this paper was to evaluate the extent to which students could demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and attitudes detailed in the British Columbia social studies curriculum. The paper focuses on those aspects of the assessment that concerned critical thinking skills. All students in grades 4, 7, and 10 took part in the assessment; this numbered about 110,000 students. The assessment involved attitude scales, demographic questions, and two types of achievement items--multiple choice questions and open-ended activities. In addition, a questionnaire was distributed to social studies teachers; among other questions, the teachers were asked about the importance of critical thinking the their classrooms. The findings of the assessment led to the conclusions that the critical thinking dimensions of the social studies curriculum have not been as effectively implemented as intended. Six recommendations are made in the following areas: classroom practice, critical thinking, curriculum content, curriculum guidelines, implementation and in-service, and teacher education and certification. A 9-item list of references, a sample of instruments used in the assessment, and sample student answers, are included. (DB)

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Critical Thinking in Social Studies:

Methods and Findings of a Wide-scale Assessment

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Introduction

The Ministry of Education of the Province of British Columbia contracts with researchers to conduct a wide-scale assessment of one curricular area each year as part of its Learning Assessment Program. Social studies had not been assessed since 1977, although the curriculum had undergone substantial revision in the intervening years. In keeping with curriculum trends elsewhere, references to "critical thinking" gained prominence in the revised curriculum designed and implemented in the mid-1980s. However, because critical thinking was neither defined nor explained in the curriculum materials available to teachers, one of the challenges of the assessment was to arrive at a definition that would provide a foundation for designing appropriate assessment activities. In addition, there were few models to draw upon for designing multiple-choice questions or open-ended activities which could be used to measure critical thinking in social studies.

Social Studies in British Columbia

Social studies is mandatory for all students in British Columbia in Grades 1 through 11. While there is a standard curriculum for all students in the province, teachers have discretion in the selection of textbooks and resources, and in adapting the curriculum to meet local needs. This differentiation of classroom practices dictated that novel content be used as the basis for the development of items intended to measure critical thinking.

Objectives of the Assessment

The purpose of the assessment was to evaluate the extent to which students could demonstrate the knowledge, skills and attitudes detailed in the British Columbia social studies curriculum. Assessment of critical thinking was only one part of this wide-scale assessment.

Specific objectives of the assessment included the following:

1. To assess the extent to which students have achieved the objectives specified in the curriculum guide for social studies.

2. To compare, where objectives are similar, the social studies achievement of British Columbia students with achievement in other jurisdictions.

3. To measure key aspects of classroom practices to ascertain whether there are measurable relationships between classroom practices and social studies achievement.

4. To assess teachers' views of the social studies program.

5. To provide recommendations for educators at the classroom, district and provincial levels based on the findings of the assessment.

One of the unique features of wide-scale assessments in British Columbia is that results are reported only at the school, district and provincial levels. Individual student results are not reported; rather, the goal is to investigate the extent to which the curriculum has been implemented as intended.

Critical Thinking

There are four major goals of the social studies program in British Columbia: students will learn about Canada, the world, and the individual's role in society, and develop a willingness to participate as a member of society. Each of these four goals begins with the statement "through the exercise of critical thinking and problem-solving...". Critical thinking, however, is not defined in the curriculum guide, although the attention given to critical thinking in the goal statements and other parts of the document attests to its intended importance.

The centrality of critical thinking in social studies education is rooted in American National Education Association documents which created the new discipline of social studies in 1916. Since that time, however, a variety of theoretical perspectives on critical thinking have emerged.

One of the first tasks of the Contract Team was to determine what was meant by critical thinking in the context of social studies in the province. Many researchers and philosophers of education have attempted to define critical thinking. For example, Cuban (1984) notes that "defining thinking skills, reasoning, critical thought, and problem solving is troublesome", and that in the minds of educators and parents alike they are probably "indistinguishable" (p. 676). Similarly, Beyer (1984) laments the "inability of educators to arrive at a commonly held definition for the skills we do attempt to teach" (p. 487).

Theoretical definitions of critical thinking can be organized into two interrelated approaches: those which focus on the "critical" aspect of critical thinking, where the learner/thinker is developing epistemological skills to evaluate the adequacy of knowledge, and those which focus on the problem-solving and decision-making processes.

As an example of the epistemological approach, there is widespread agreement that critical thinking includes features such as:

--distinguishing facts from opinions or values
--assessing the reliability of a source

--assessing the accuracy of a statement
--distinguishing relevant from irrelevant information
--detecting bias
--identifying unstated assumptions, and
--recognizing logical inconsistencies (Beyer, 1985).

Critical epistemological processes may be subsumed within problem-solving and decision-making processes. Kneedler (1987), for example, in assessing history and social studies in California, defined and operationalized critical thinking as: defining a problem; judging information; and drawing conclusions and solving the problem. Within Kneedler's definition, critical thinking is associated with problem-solving, specifically in the process of "judging information". This approach is in keeping with the inherent assumptions of the B.C. Social Studies Curriculum Guide, which highlight problem-solving and decision-making activities.

According to Beyer, critical thinking involves two types of thinking:

> first, **analysis** of some data -- taking it apart to find specific clues relevant to a particular analytical purpose (as when one searches a document to find any clues for bias) and to identify whatever pattern may exist among the clues found. Second, some **evaluation** is required -- some judgement about the extent to which the clues and patterns of clues, if found, match sufficiently the type of critical thinking feature sought. Engaging in these two types of thinking -- analysis and evaluation -- ... is what critical thinking is all about (p. 276).

These cognitive processes, analysis and evaluation, are central to the B.C. social studies curriculum. This was determined through an analysis of the 170 skills identified as central to the Social Studies curriculum. Each of the approximately 170 skills was coded according to Bloom's taxonomy (Bloom, Englehart, Furst, Hill and Krathwohl, 1956). This analysis revealed a preponderance of skills at the analysis and evaluation levels, and to a lesser extent, synthesis.

In order to reflect both the explicit and implicit intentions of the curriculum guide, we designed activities to assess problem-solving and decision-making, as well as the epistemological processes noted above. Both problem-solving and decision-making processes were assessed primarily through a series of questions organized around a scenario. The problem-solving activities were largely multiple-choice items, while decision-making activities were open-ended. (See Figure 1 for a sample of Grade 4 multiple-choice items; Figure 2 for Grade 4 open-ended activity; Figure 3, Grade 7 multiple-choice items; Figure 4, Grade 10 multiple-choice items; Figure 5, Grade 10 open-ended activity.)

Methods

All students in Grades 4, 7 and 10 took part in the assessment; this represents about 110,000 students. These grades were selected as representative of students in the primary, intermediate and secondary programs. Therefore, the assessment measured the cumulative outcomes of the curriculum up to and including the grade at which the assessment was carried out. Students completed the assessment in their language of instruction; in British Columbia, about 5% of students are enroled in French Immersion programs or programme-cadre de francais.[1]

Practitioners were involved at every stage of this three-year project. The initial task of the assessment team (which was comprised of three academics and one practitioner) was to develop Tables of Specifications to reflect the objectives of the curriculum.[2] These tables were reviewed by an Advisory Committee comprised of practising teachers, school district staff and trustees, other academics, and Ministry of Education officials.

Once consensus had been reached on the Tables of Specifications, fifteen teachers, representing both French and English programs, developed multiple-choice items and open-ended achievement activities.[3] About half of the multiple-choice items at each grade were intended to assess critical thinking. The open-ended booklets included questions which guided students through a decision-making process. The assessment team also designed a questionnaire to gather information from teachers about their educational background, instructional strategies used in teaching social studies, and perceived in-service needs.

All achievement items were reviewed by panels of teachers drawn from all regions of the province, and were pilot-tested on small samples of students. Using pilot test results, items with the best psychometric characteristics were chosen for inclusion in the final booklets, which were administered to all students in Grades 4, 7 and 10 in the province.

After preliminary analysis of the results, Interpretation Panels comprised of practitioners, school trustees and parents were assembled to assist the Contract Team in interpreting the findings.

Data Collection and Analyses

A matrix sampling procedure was used in this assessment. Four booklets were developed for each of the three grades; each booklet included one or more attitude scales, demographic questions, and achievement items. All students in the province completed one booklet that included multiple-choice achievement items, and students in an 8% random sample of

classrooms also completed a booklet requiring open-ended responses to a problem-solving activity.

The multiple-choice items were analyzed using a standard computerized item-analysis program. In addition, items were grouped by domain (both by goal and cognitive level) to reflect the allocations in the Tables of Specifications. Judgements about performance on the domains, aggregated at the provincial level, were made by Interpretation Panels comprised of teachers, school trustees and parents, using a group consensus procedure. Performance on each domain was rated weak, marginal, satisfactory, very satisfactory or strong.

Student performance on the open-ended activities were coded using scales developed on a sample of pilot responses to the activities. Sample scales for the Grade 4 letter-writing activity illustrated above are presented in Figure 6; a sample of a Grade 4 letter at each scale point (1 through 4) is presented in Figure 7. Sample scales for Grade 10 are presented in Figure 8; sample Grade 10 letters are presented in Figure 9.

Teacher questionnaire responses provided data relating to the importance teachers place on critical thinking in their classrooms, the strategies they choose to foster and evaluate critical thinking, as well as pre-service and in-service preparation for teaching social studies.

Results

Written Response Decision-Making Activity

The written response booklets at grades 4, 7 and 10 were designed to measure some aspects of the decision-making process outlined in the social studies curriculum guide. Grade 4 and 7 students were presented with a town-planning problem, given more than one point of view on the issue, and asked to make a decision and justify it with reasons. The quality of student responses in Grades 4 and 7 were better at the beginning and concluding stages of the decision-making process (identifying the issue and interpreting the information provided, and reaching a conclusion supported by data) than at the intermediary stages (identifying alternatives and weighing the pros and cons of each option). These results suggest that elementary teachers may place more emphasis on students' producing a final product (for example, a letter) than on the processes used to arrive at a decision.

In the final letter writing activity, 29% of Grade 4 students and 37% of Grade 7 students wrote letters coded as: original; recognizes the importance of stakeholders; states a clear argument; justifies the decision with two or more reasons. French Immersion students in Grade 7 out-performed regular

program Grade 7 students in the quality of letter they wrote; 50% of the French students' letters met the criteria mentioned above.

The change in the type and quality of responses between students in Grade 4 and students in Grade 7 reveals a satisfactory level of growth among elementary students in their understanding of the decision-making process and their ability to think more critically about certain issues. By using the same decision-making activity at Grade 4 and 7, the Contract Team was able to observe this growth in development. It was humorous to note that many students in grade 4 chose to build the houses on the farmland rather than on the hillside, for the reason that on the flat farmland, the houses would be level, whereas on the hillside the floors would be sloped, making it difficult to walk! And these responses came from students who live in a mountainous province! Students in grade 7 better understood building principles, and expressed different reasons for wanting the houses built on the farmland rather than the hillside.

Grade 10 students had little difficulty restating the main issue of the article on refugees. They had more difficulty, however, describing the author's point of view. About 51% of students provided responses rated as "adequate", while 39% of responses to this question were rated "inadequate." Only 10% of Grade 10 students gave responses that were rated by the Teacher Coding Team as "insightful" and/or "well-reasoned." Of greater concern to the Contract Team was Grade 10 students' responses to the letter-writing activity, the final task of the decision-making scenario on Canada's response to the flight of a refugee group. Twenty-two percent of students did not attempt the letter-writing activity at all. Several teachers postulated that Grade 10 students may not have had adequate time to complete this final question. This is assumed to be the case for French program students in Grade 10, where 38% did not write the final letter.

Of those students who did complete the letter-writing activity, 40% of responses were coded at the lowest two levels, either a "O" or a "1". These responses showed little or no decision-making ability, illogical or flawed reasoning, and little or no elaboration of ideas. What particularly concerned the Teacher Coding Team and the Contract Team was that most of the responses classified as "0" or "1" included discriminatory or derogatory remarks towards immigrants or refugees. This pattern of inappropriate and offensive comments gradually emerged over a period of days as teachers working on their own coding responses noticed an increasing number of negative comments embedded in the text they were reviewing and began to inform the members of the Contract Team of this discovery. As this finding was unintended, emerging only through the process of evaluating the responses according to different criteria, a thorough documentation of these type of responses was not taken. The offensive comments, however, are of

concern to the Contract Team, and further analysis is being done to assess these responses.[4]

Multiple Choice Critical Thinking Items

The Interpretation Panels at all three grades rated student performance on the multiple choice Critical Thinking items as "Very Satisfactory". Panel members, especially at the elementary level, supported the emphasis given to critical thinking in the social studies curriculum (50%) and concluded that critical thinking, which subsumes problem-solving and decision-making activities, had been successfully implemented in classrooms throughout the province.

The Contract Team, however, while somewhat satisfied with student performance on the multiple-choice critical thinking items, think that students' performance may have been overrated by Interpretation Panel members, particularly at the grade 10 level. Student performance on a number of relatively easy critical thinking items was unexceptional, yet was ranked quite high since teacher expectations on these items were quite low. Had Grade 10 Interpretation Panel members had higher expectations for student performance on all critical thinking items, the panel's overall level of satisfaction would have been lower, likely at the "Satisfactory" rather than the "Very Satisfactory" level. This perspective is supported by remarks recorded by several Grade 10 Interpretation Panel members who, over several days, reiterated that secondary teachers were more concerned with teaching "facts"and "understandings" about social studies topics than with addressing the critical thinking dimensions of the curriculum, a view, they suggested is justified by the way the secondary social studies curriculum is organized. Secondary teachers on the Item Review and Interpretation Panels regularly expressed surprise at the amount of critical thinking content in the assessment, and at the perceived level of difficulty of the novel items that had not been overtly taught by teachers in the classroom.

Pedagogy and Critical Thinking

The Contract Team believes that a relationship should exist between the activities students engage in in the classroom, which promote or discourage critical thinking, and their performance on the critical thinking items in the assessment. The results from the Teachers Questionnaire, and from questions posed to students, reveal that those instructional strategies more likely to encourage students to think critically about issues are not being widely used by social studies teachers in British Columbia. Elementary social studies teachers are more likely to use interactive and thought-provoking strategies than are secondary school teachers. Table 1 lists the five most common instructional strategies teachers report using at grades 4, 7 and 10.

Table 1

Most Prevalent Teaching Strategies

	Percent of Teachers		
	Grade 4	Grade 7	Grade 10
Full class discussion	86	85	74
Using the textbook	77	79	76
Small group discussion	63	61	--
Library research	55	68	--
Film or video	54	49	56
Worksheets	--[5]	--	54
Lecture	--	--	45

Teachers at Grades 4 and 7 report relying on similar teaching methods. Four out of five elementary teachers who responded said that they used full class discussion as their most common approach. This method is followed by using the textbook, small group work, library research (used more at Grade 7 than at Grade 4), and films and videos. More innovative strategies, such as simulations, role-plays, field studies, and educational computer programs are used only rarely, although somewhat more so at Grade 4 than at Grade 7.

Secondary social studies teachers engage students in simulations, role-plays, field studies and educational computer programs even less often than their elementary counterparts. Small group discussion and library research, common at the elementary school level, are uncommon at the secondary school level. Instead, the strategies used most often at the secondary level are those that primarily encourage students to be passive recipients of knowledge. (This is not unlike Goodlad's 1984 findings in his study of secondary school classrooms in the United States.) In secondary school social studies classrooms in British Columbia, the textbook is used most often as the basis of classroom activity, followed by full class discussion, films and videos, worksheets, and lectures. These modes of instruction are teacher, book, or film/video centered and dominated. Little attention is given to student-centered or student-controlled discussion or to creative, hands-on endeavors. While critical thinking can occur during any of these activities, these five strategies, taken together, do little to cultivate an atmosphere where critical thinking can thrive.

When teachers at the three grades were asked, in an open-ended question, to describe those classroom activities they use to foster critical thinking, the four most commonly cited strategies at grades 4, 7 and 10 were:

1. small group/full class discussion

2. asking questions, using Bloom's Taxonomy, or other questioning techniques

3. individual written projects (for example, essays, reports on library research), and

4. problem-solving and decision-making activities.

The fourth item, problem-solving and decision-making activities, was not explained by the respondents, so it is difficult to determine what is meant by this approach. While the first three activities can promote critical thinking, secondary teachers, as noted above, reported that they only rarely used small group discussion, or library research projects in their instruction. Therefore, one must assume that secondary teachers rely on questioning techniques in full class discussion or in written work, to promote critical thinking. This hardly seems adequate.

Teachers were asked to rate the extent to which their students learn from the instructional strategies they employ. Elementary and secondary teachers alike report that they believe that the methods they are currently using in their classrooms have the greatest impact on student achievement. To assess the accuracy of this belief, the Contract Team correlated students' achievement results with their reports of how often their teachers used twelve different strategies. (Teacher and student reporting of the most commonly used classroom strategies are the same). At all three grades, it was found that "use of worksheets" and "copying notes from the board" are significantly related to achievement--but in a negative direction. This indicates that those students exposed more often to worksheets and to copying notes from the board have a lower level of achievement. On the other hand, students who reported that "their teachers talk about topics in social studies" and that "they are encouraged to explain their ideas through discussion" performed at higher levels on the achievement surveys.

Since teachers believe that the methods they are using with students are the most effective to accomplish social studies aims (including the critical thinking dimension), in-service teacher education programs should stress research findings which indicate otherwise. Stodolsky (1988), for example, found that higher order thinking occurs more often when students are working in small groups, than in full class, teacher-direction discussion, or when students are working on their own in individual assignments. She writes:

> If complexity and challenge go hand in hand, children can expect the least challenge when under teacher direction..., variety and middle level challenges when working on their own..., and the highest levels of cognitive challenge when working with one another in social studies (p. 82).

If children are more intellectually engaged when presented with certain pedagogical approaches over others, then teachers need to re-think those instructional strategies they rely upon in the classroom and employ strategies that are more interactive and challenging for students.

Implementation Concerns

Teachers, however, cannot be expected to radically change their instructional practices without the support of other levels of the school system (Fullan, 1982). In British Columbia very little support has been provided at the provincial or district levels to help implement the 50% critical thinking component mandated by the social studies curriculum of 1983/85. The provincial Ministry of Education sent each elementary school a Primary Resource Guide and an Intermediate Resource Guide and provided three videotapes to District Resource staff; these materials included concrete examples of problem-solving and decision-making activities. Few elementary teachers, however, know these materials exist: only 25% of Grade 4 teachers and 20% of Grade 7 teachers knew of them. At the secondary level, the Resource Book, modelled after the elementary ones, was never produced and the videotapes addressing critical thinking were made available to school districts long after the new curriculum was in place.

In addition, only a few workshops on the new social studies curriculum were provided at the district level, or by Teachers' Federation staff. Less than half of all teachers reported attending any in-service session on the social studies curriculum.

Overall, very little attention was given at the provincial, district, and school levels, to effectively implement the social studies curriculum. This was compounded by a curriculum guide which does not define what is meant by critical thinking, nor does it give any examples as to how teachers might design lessons which focus on critical thinking. Critical thinking may be interpreted differently by each social studies teacher in the province, and those teachers who do value critical thinking are left on their own to design effective ways of addressing critical thinking with their students.

Teachers participating in the Assessment recommended that greater support be given teachers to assist them to effectively implement the critical thinking aspects of the curriculum. Teachers at Grades 4 and 7 recommended that the support come in the form of pre-service and in-service educational programs, while Grade 10 teachers suggested that appropriate instructional resources be provided. The Contract Team, realizing that change comes slowly and requires the support of many players, suggests that both resource materials and educational programs be provided for teachers at all grades.

Conclusions & Recommendations

The findings of the wide-scale Social Studies Assessment in British Columbia, lead us to conclude that the critical thinking dimensions of the social studies curriculum have not been as effectively implemented at the classroom level as intended. While teachers at all grade levels acknowledge that critical thinking is important, elementary teachers are more likely to involve their students in critical thinking activities. Secondary teachers need to be convinced that 50% of the social studies program should be devoted to critical thinking. This may require a revision of the curriculum guide to better highlight critical thinking. Most assuredly, the Ministry of Education needs to define what is meant by critical thinking in social studies rather than merely stating that it is important. Resource materials and in-service programs need to be made available which provide teachers with concrete examples of ways to address critical thinking, and which show the relationship between critical thinking and instructional strategies.

While student performance on the critical thinking items (multiple-choice and open-ended) was satisfactory, elementary students responding to the open-ended decision-making activities were better able to identify the problem or issue and arrive at a solution, than they were able to identify possible alternatives and weigh the pros and cons of each choice. These intermediary stages of the decision-making processes outlined in the British Columbia social studies curriculum guide require analysis, synthesis and evaluation--important cognitive processes that could be stressed more often in classrooms throughout the province.

At the grade 10 level, students need further work in identifying a point of view and in reaching a decision that is supported by logical and well-conceived reasons. Further attention needs to be given to students' attitudes and beliefs which surfaced in the letter-writing activity of the open-ended instrument. This concern is being pursued in a separate analysis by researchers at Simon Fraser University. Overall, the Contract Team is concerned that Grade 10 students may be lagging behind in critical thinking ability in social studies as compared to students in Grades 4 and 7.

The B. C. Social Studies Assessment concluded with a number of recommendations made by the Contract Team. Of the twenty-nine recommendations, fifteen of them relate to critical thinking. These fifteen recommendations are reported here:

1. Classroom Practice

In order to establish greater congruence between the formal and informal curriculum, classroom practice should incorporate teaching strategies that

model curriculum content, such as cooperative learning and democratic decision-making.

Students should be provided with many more opportunities to participate in school and community projects that allow them to learn from the community, and to apply the knowledge they learn to the real world.

2. **Critical Thinking**

The new curriculum guide for social studies should clearly articulate what is meant by critical thinking, and its relative importance within the curriculum. Furthermore, the new curriculum guide should clearly distinguish the meanings and associated skills of critical thinking, decision-making, and problem-solving.

Strategies for addressing critical thinking in the classroom should be included in the new curriculum guide for social studies, to provide teachers with models for implementing these approaches in their classrooms.

A provincial committee should be established to investigate structural and organizational impediments in secondary schools that inhibit the effective implementation of critical thinking approaches, and to make recommendations for change. This need is particularly urgent in the context of the impending curriculum reorganization in the province.

3. **Curriculum Content**

There should be a reduction in the amount of content to be covered at the secondary level, in favour of greater stress on the development of higher-level cognitive processes and attitudes. The content that is addressed should be treated in depth, rather than treating many topics superficially.

Racial and ethnic tolerance should be specifically addressed in the formal curriculum.

4. **Curriculum Guidelines**

A new curriculum guide for social studies should be developed.

The new curriculum guide should encompass all Grades, 1 through 11, rather than be divided into separate elementary and secondary guides, to provide teachers at all levels with an understanding of the intent, continuity, and strategies of the entire program.

In the new curriculum guide, material previously separated into the curriculum guides and resource manuals should be combined to provide one comprehensive and logical document to assist teachers understand the practical application of the ideas outlined in the Guide.

The new curriculum guide should clearly integrate skills, attitudes, and content in each grade, and there should be a greater balance among these three areas.

5. Implementation and In-service

Implementation of the social studies curriculum should become a priority. A committee should be struck to develop a long-term province-wide plan for implementing the social studies curriculum.

Teachers need in-service education about strategies for enhancing critical thinking and inquiry learning in their classrooms.

A concerted effort must be made to ensure that more innovative classroom strategies are employed by social studies teachers at all grades. This task requires the involvement of every level of the educational system: classroom teachers, school district staff, the B.C. Teachers' Federation and the B.C. Social Studies Teachers Association, faculties of education, the B.C. School Trustees Association and the Ministry of Education.

6. Teacher Education and Certification

A program of continuing education should be designed that enhances teachers' knowledge and skills in social studies pedagogy, and increases their familiarity with current social studies research.

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Endnotes

1. Programme-cadre de francais is designed for students whose first language is French, while French Immersion programs attract students whose first language is English and who wish to become bilingual.

2. The Tables of Specifications served as the "blueprint" for the multiple-choice achievement surveys, indicating the proportion of items to be allocated for each goal of the curriculum, and the cognitive level as classified by Bloom's taxonomy.

Tables of Specifications

Grade 4
Percent of items

	Recall (Knowledge)	Understanding and Application	Higher Order and Critical Thinking
1. Canada: Past, Present, Future	6	17	24
2. The World: Past, Present, Future	1	2	3
3. The Individual's Role in Society	6	17	24
Totals	13%	36%	51%

48% each for goals 1 and 3

Grades 7 and 10
Percent of items

	Recall (Knowledge)	Understanding and Application	Higher Order and Critical Thinking
1. Canada: Past, Present, Future	4	12	17
2. The World: Past, Present, Future	4	12	17
3. The Individual's Role in Society	4	12	17
Totals	13%	36%	51%

33% each for goals

3. The assessment team also developed a series of attitude scales to assess attitudinal outcomes of the curriculum, as well as a questionnaire to collect demographic information.

4. It should be noted that few, if any, negative responses toward immigrants or refugees were recorded by the Teacher Coding Team for French Immersion. This finding, too, is being examined by the Contact Team in a further study.

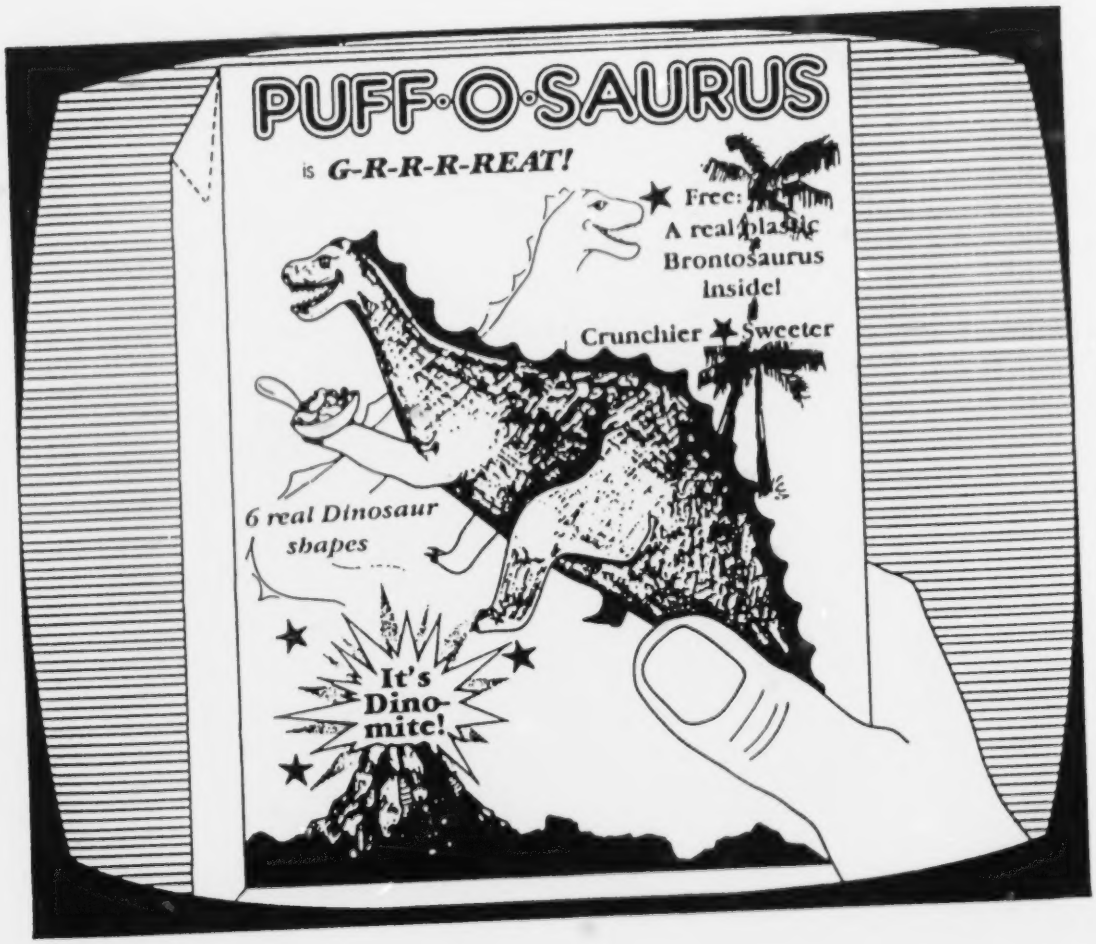
5. Not in the top five preferred activities of teachers at this grade.

Figure 1

Sample of Grade 4 multiple-choice items

Puff-O-Saurus

Study the T.V. screen; then choose the BEST answer for questions 4 to 8.



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4. John saw this commercial while he was watching his favourite cartoon show. The company chose this commercial to show during cartoon time because they thought that

   A. children would learn about dinosaurs.
   B. people would be hungry.
   C. children would be watching.
   D. families would be together for dinner.

5. This commercial tells us that children will like this cereal because

   A. dinosaur shapes make eating cereal fun.
   B. it is in one of the four food groups.
   C. we will learn about volcanoes.
   D. dinosaurs died out many years ago.

6. This commercial tells us about Puff-O-Saurus. What fact do we learn about Puff-o-saurus from this commercial? Puff-O-Saurus is

   A. sweet.
   B. fun.
   C. healthy.
   D. good for your teeth.

7. Which statement about Puff-o-saurus is **not** a fact?

   A. Puff-O-Saurus is shaped like dinosaurs.
   B. Puff-O-Saurus is sweet.
   C. Puff-O-Saurus is fun to eat.
   D. Puff-O-Saurus comes with a toy brontosaurus.

8. John is at the grocery store with his dad. John says, "Look Dad! There is Puff-O-Saurus. Let's get some." "Why should we buy that cereal?" asks Dad. John answers, "Because I love dinosaurs and Puff-O-Saurus is GREAT!" John has never tasted this cereal before. Why does he think it is great?

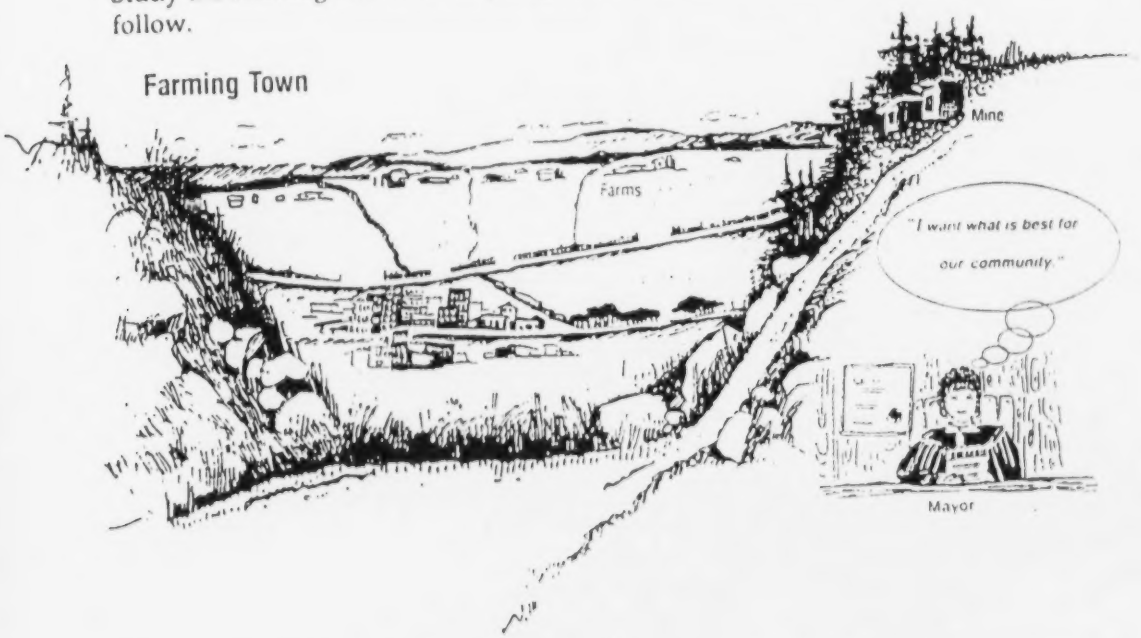
   A. Because he wants to learn about dinosaurs.
   B. Because it is very healthy.
   C. Because there is a free toy brontosaurus in every box.
   D. Because he likes coloured cereals.

Figure 2

Grade 4 open ended activity

DAYTONVILLE

Study the drawing and read the paragraph. Then answer the questions that follow.



Daytonville is a small farming community built in a valley. When a new mine opened nearby many new people moved into the community. Builders wanted to buy some of the farmland near the town centre to build homes for the new families. However, some people in the community felt that the new houses should be built on the hillside near the mine and that the farmland should not be used.

The mayor of Daytonville realized this was an important concern and asked members of the community to send her letters telling her what they thought should happen.

The mayor received many letters. These four letters were typical of the different views of people in the community. Read the letters.

Dear Mayor:

I think the houses should be built near the town centre rather than on the hillside. Houses are much easier to build on flat farmland than on the hillside, which is rough, full of trees, and hard to get to. We already have roads in the valley to bring in building supplies. Schools and parks are close by. Building houses on the hillside would be too costly.

Sincerely,

A Builder

Dear Mayor:

You must allow the farmland to be turned into housing. Once this happens more businesses will open in our community. These new businesses will provide more services for our townspeople. Townspeople will not need to travel as often to the city to get the special things they need. More businesses also means more tax dollars. We could raise enough tax money to build a library or add on to our community centre. We may even become big enough to have our own hospital.

Sincerely,

A Merchant

Dear Mayor:

I don't think the farmland surrounding the town should be turned into places for new houses. There is very little farmland in the valley and we need it to grow hay for the ranchers and to grow vegetables for the townspeople. If these products have to be shipped in it will cost everyone more money. Our family also likes the town the way it is. Everyone knows each other and there is very little traffic. We even leave our doors unlocked.

Sincerely,

A Farmer

Dear Mayor:

Although I welcome new people to our valley, I think new homes should be built on the hillside. Our community has been like this for many years and has a long history. Some of our buildings are over 70 years old. People are happy here. I'm afraid we will grow so fast that we will change the character of the community. The quiet, sleepy atmosphere will disappear as the old buildings are torn down and new ones take their place.

Sincerely,

A Historian

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Imagine that **YOU** are the mayor of Daytonville. You care about what the people in the community think about where to build the houses. Of the people who have written to you, name one person who is in favour of building the houses on the **hillside**, and state why.

_____ is in favour of building the houses on the **hillside** because

_____

_____

Of the people who have written you, name **one** person who is in favour of building the houses on the **farmland**, and state why.

_____ is in favour of building the houses on the **farmland** because

_____

_____

As mayor, you have thought about many possible results (good and bad) of building the houses on the hillside and on the farmland. Write down some of these results.

If the houses are built on the hillside

Good Results	**Bad Results**

If the houses are built on the farmland

Good Results	Bad Results

As the mayor, you now must make a decision based on all the views you have heard and thought about. You, the mayor, have decided to write a short letter to the newspaper explaining your decision.

Refer to your notes on pages 7 and 8. Then write a letter stating your decision where the homes will be built. Be sure to explain why you made this decision. You do not need to write more than two paragraphs. (Plan and draft a rough copy of your letter on the next page; then write the final copy on this page.)

Dear Citizens:

Figure 3

Grade 7 multiple-choice items

ROMAN CIVILIZATION

Study the carvings below; then answer questions 12 and 13.

The Greengrocer

The Blacksmith

The Cobbler

The Butcher

12. What can be understood about life in Roman times from these carvings found on Roman monuments?

    A. Families in Rome did everything for themselves.
    B. Romans probably did not live in settlements.
    C. People worked at different specialized jobs.
    D. Few goods and services were available in Roman times.

13. What could be said about the Roman culture from looking at these carvings?

    A. Clothing for men was very similar to clothing for men today.
    B. The Romans used sophisticated technology.
    C. Craftsmanship was important to the Romans.
    D. Women did many of the same jobs as men.

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Figure 4

Grade 10 multiple-choice items

Wastes

Read the two passages; then choose the BEST answer for questions 1 to 6.

POEM

Some say the world will end in fire,
Some say in ice,
And some say it'll go in the flash
Of a big explosive device.
But, at the risk of sounding sarcastic,
I say the world will choke on plastic.

READING

Worldwide people produce about a billion tonnes of waste a year. The rate of which we do so is closely linked with Gross National Product. In many countries, waste is seen as a problem, not a resource. It is dumped rather than converted into useful products. Here are some examples of places around the world and their per person production of wastes per year:

Los Angeles	3.0 kg	Mexico City	0.4 kg
New York	1.82 kg	London	0.83 kg
Sao Paulo	0.57 kg	Ibadfan	0.46 kg

1. Which place listed has the largest production of waste products?

   A. Los Angeles.
   B. New York.
   C. Singapore.
   D. Jakarta.

2. Someone once said: "If you arrived at earth from another planet, you would easily find the most industrialized people. All you would have to look for are the most polluted places on earth!" This statement

   A. contradicts the data provided in the Reading.
   B. supports the data provided in the Reading.
   C. has nothing to do with the data provided in the Reading.
   D. relates more to the Poem than to the Reading.

3. Our planet is a closed ecological system. This means that there are no new places to exploit. We must handle our waste products here on this planet. Rather than dumping wastes into huge pits, it would be better to

   A. send the wastes in rockets to the moon.
   B. dump them in the ocean instead.
   C. sort and recycle the reusable things.
   D. make everyone dump wastes on their own property.

4. In the Poem, the author claims that one thing is the biggest pollution problem. It is

   A. fire.
   B. nuclear war.
   C. plastic.
   D. ice age.

5. People in poorer countries usually recycle waste products more often than people from richer industrialized countries. One reason is that

   A. they have more education on this subject.
   B. being poor, they throw out fewer items.
   C. their governments have passed stricter laws.
   D. they don't have regular garbage pick up.

6. Which statement best reflects the poet's point of view?

   A. A nuclear war is the greatest threat to the world's future.
   B. Some Canadian communities have started recycling programs.
   C. Plastics are being replaced by reusable products.
   D. The amount of plastic used each year is increasing.

Figure 5

Grade 10 open-ended activity

Refugees

Read this excerpt from a newsletter; then answer the questions that follow.

WORLD REFUGEES:
CANADA'S INTERNATIONAL ROLE

by Dr. Stanley Knight

It is estimated that there are currently more than 12 million refugees in the world. They are found on every continent and in virtually every country.

Since 1951, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has been responsible for the international protection of refugees and for seeking long-term solutions to their problems.

People become refugees through war, civil strife, famine or natural disasters. The UNHCR uses three major strategies with refugees: resettlement back to their country of birth if they so choose; integration into the neighbouring country to which they have fled; or resettlement in another country that has agreed to accept them.

Canada is geographically removed from the major refugee producing areas of the world and has had little impact changing world events that produce refugees. Canada's response to refugees involves three approaches:

1) **Resettlement** — Refugees are screened outside of Canada, brought to Canada (recently at government expense), given some settlement funds, language and vocational training. In 1987, approximately 20,000 refugees were settled under this program.

2) **External aid** — Funds are provided to countries primarily in areas of health, nutrition, educational, and vocational training. Global concerns are most important, as are the needs of women and children who make up three quarters of the world's refugees.

3) **Human Rights advocacy** — Pressure to improve in human rights occurs mainly through diplomatic channels, or through the United Nations. Support is also given to organizations such as the Red Cross, Oxfam, and Amnesty International.

There are four main areas of the world that command Canada's attention: Central America, Africa, the Middle East and Southeast Asia.

Central America
Various violent military campaigns in Central America have displaced 2 million people over the past 10 years. For example, 300,000 refugees from Guatemala now live in Mexico; 500,000 refugees from El Salvador now live in the United States.

Canada has taken a leading role in offering refugees a Canadian home when it has not been possible to resettle them back into their own countries. Canada has also helped settle refugees into neighbouring countries. Aid has also been given to refugees living in camps in bordering countries. At the diplomatic level Canada has offered to increase financial aid for health and education if human rights violations are decreased and democratic processes restored.

Africa
Half the world's refugees are African, fleeing drought, war, military repression, and apartheid in South Africa. For example, close to 1.5 million refugees have fled Ethiopia to neighbouring countries such as Somalia and Sudan.

Canada has provided millions of dollars in aid. Canada has also led the war of words against human rights violations and apartheid. Few Africans have been resettled in Canada.

Middle East
Over 2 million Palestinians have registered as refugees with the United Nations. Between one and two million people have fled Iran in the past seven years, many seeking refuge in Turkey and Pakistan, hoping for eventual settlement in a western country.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 produced the world's largest single population of refugees. An estimated 3.5 million Afghan refugees now live in Pakistan and 1.5 million in Iran. Canada provides aid to refugees in the many camps, and agricultural and medical programs for refugees living in Pakistan.

Southeast Asia
When the Vietnam war ended in 1975 over 650,000 people left Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Many of these refugees escaped in boats; they were called the "Boat People." About 9,000 settled in Canada. Canada continues to contribute to the anti-piracy programs to protect Vietnamese boat people who still trickle out of Vietnam.

Conclusion
An increasing number of refugees are arriving in Canada. The recent arrival of refugees in boats off our east coast has caused some people to demand tighter refugee laws. These people think Canada's laws are too liberal. Yet others, refugee advocates and experts on international law and world issues, have called Canada's refugee policies arbitrary and discriminatory.

The fear among people who work with refugees is that Canada will be too worried about letting in people who are not really refugees and will pass laws preventing the admission of people who desperately need help. Canada has traditionally always had a commitment to helping genuine refugees.

Despite the present debate, there is popular support for continuing Canada's external aid and human rights advocacy programs. All of Canada's refugee programs are modest, but remind us that we are all responsible for making this world a better place for all people.

(Dr. Stanley Knight was President of the Vancouver Refugee Council and a member of the UNHCR Canadian Task Force at the time of writing. He is currently the Assistant Deputy Chairman of the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada. The article is adapted from Legal Perspectives, April 1988).

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1. What is the main issue dealt with in this article?

_____

_____

2. Summarize, in your own words, one approach mentioned in the article used by Canada to help solve the problems of world refugees.

_____

_____

3. What point of view does the author, Dr. Stanley Knight, hold regarding Canada's response to refugees?

_____

_____

4. The article includes information about the "four critical refugee producing areas in the world". Using the information from the article, complete the chart below. Record the information in the appropriate box.

	Number of Refugees	One Cause of the Problem
Central America		
Africa		
Middle East		
Southeast Asia		

5. Imagine that the Prime Minister of Canada has assigned you the task of finding out how Canada can help one of the large refugee groups who have recently been left homeless.

   a) List four questions you would want answers to before recommending a course of action.

      i _____
      ii _____
      iii _____
      iv _____

   b) List four sources of information you would use to find answers to questions such as the ones you have listed above. Be as specific as possible.

      i _____
      ii _____
      iii _____
      iv _____

   c) You decide that there are two possible courses of action that Canada could take in regard to this refugee group. List these two options and <u>one</u> positive and <u>one</u> negative result of each option.

Option #1	
One Positive Result	**One Negative Result**

Option #2	
One Positive Result	**One Negative Result**

   d) Now you must choose <u>one</u> of these options to recommend to the Prime Minister. Write a two-paragraph letter to the Prime Minister stating your choice and giving your reasons.

   Use the blank space at the end of this booklet for your rough work.

Figure 6

Sample scales for the Grade 4 letter-writing activity

Grades 4 and 7 - Scales for Letter-Writing Activity

Percentage Distribution of Students by Scale points					
Scale point	0	1	2	3	4
Percent	2	12	43	30	7

Basis of the scale

- originality
- sense of decision-making - logic
- number of reasons
- elaboration of reasons

Note: Accept creative decisions IF they solve the problem

Percentage of students not responding: 6

Scale point 0

- no decision at all OR completely illegible or incomprehensible

Scale point 1

- reaches a decision but does not support it OR reaches a decision which is illogical

Scale point 2

- reaches a decision
- decision supported by one or more reasons repeated directly from the text, but not developed
- may or may not recognize stakeholders
- circular reasoning ("houses should be built in the town because it's a town")

Scale point 3

- reaches a decision
- gives one or two reasons and supports, or develops one or two reasons
- states an argument
- may recognize the importance of stakeholders

Scale point 4

- reaches a decision - evidence of decision-making
- gives three or more reasons and supports them
- states a clear argument AND/OR counterargument
- argument may be original (must be logical)
- shows some sophistication in argument; argument is structured
- recognizes the importance of stakeholders in the decision-making

Figure 7

Sample letters, Grade 4

Chers concitoyens :

Merci d'envoier votre opinion, et j'ai eu une bonne idée. On peut construire aux la colline et tout le monde peut mètre comme $15 et tout le monde peut aider a construire. Merci pour votre lettre et si tu n'aime pas mon idée tu peux envoer un notre lettre.

GRADE 4 – SCALE POINT 1

Dear Citizens:

I have decided that it would be better to build the houses and buildings on the hillside. It may cost more but it won't wreck the atmosphere. Or the farmland that way it would produce more food from the farmland.

Sincerely, the Mayor.

GRADE 4 – SCALE POINT 2

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Dear Citizens:

I have thaught vearrey Long and heard and have finly come to a dission. The best place for the new house is on the farm Land.

The reasion for my dision is it wood coast to much to bilud the house on the hill side. You farmeres wood still have some furme Land Left to have crops and a ranch out back with six or seven cows and or horses and the cost woodent be as much and we might have anuff money for a nefw Libeare or to add moor to our town center or the school.

sincerly the maor

GRADE 4 – SCALE POINT 3

GRADE 4 – SCALE POINT 4

Dear Citizens:

As the mayor, I am going to build the houses near the town Centre. I do not want to wast all that nioney on building them on the hillside. and I do not want to wreckle all the famlands Andwe also know and trust each other very well. We even leave our doors unlocked as said in a letter I recieved. And thank you for all the ideas you gave me on where to build the houses. I am sorry if you do not like where I'm going to build the houses, but I think it is the best place to build them.

Sincerly the Mayor

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Figure 8

Sample scales for the Grade 10 letter-writing activity

Figure 14
Grade 10 Scales for Letter-Writing Activity

Percentage Distribution of Students by Scale points					
Scale point	0	1	2	3	4
Percent	14	26	26	10	2

Basis of the scale

- originality
- quality of argument
- sense of decision-making - logic
- recognition of consequences
- number of reasons
- elaboration of reasons

Percentage of students not responding: 22

Scale point 0

- unsupported decision, OR completely illogical, illegible, or incomprehensible

Scale point 1

- almost no decision-making process
- reasons/arguments are based on emotions, personal prejudice
- decisions not based on textual information
- illogical or flawed reasoning
- little, minimal, or no elaboration

Scale point 2

- some sense of decision-making process
- recognition of world problem
- selects conclusion without noting the consequences
- may be a flaw in reasoning
- reasons are; general (not specific), not elaborated, unsupported, contradictory, poor quality of detail
- empathy for refugees, personal response
- no evidence of racism or prejudice

Scale point 3

- some sense of decision-making process
- recognition of world problem
- less specific than a "Scale point 4"
- may contain a strong humanitarian and/or moral appeal
- no evidence of racism or prejudice

Scale point 4

- sense of decision-making process conveyed
- options and choices are stated
- recognition of results and consequences
- acknowledgement of positive and negative results
- reasons are elaborated, logical, rational
- argument is international in scope
- sense of Canada's international role/responsibility
- no evidence of racism or prejudice

Top of Scale

Takes a position (which may be a logical compromise) and supports it with logical, thoughtful, elaborated, and structured reasoning. Goes beyond the information presented in the task. (NOTE: It is the quality of the argument rather than the number of reasons that distinguishes these papers.)

Figure 9

Sample letters, Grade 10

Dear Sir,

I feel that Canada has a responsibility towards these people. It should offer them a home and give the financial aid. Nobody will take care of these refugees so we should. It will give us a good reputation.

We should immediately make plans to allow these people into our country. Proper arrangements should be made ASAP.

Sincerely,

GRADE 10 – SCALE POINT 1

Dear Mr. Prime Minister

I think the best way to deal with this problem is to do as we have been doing with the refugees. Find ~~more~~ information about them before letting them come into Canada and then find homes for them with enough money to survive for a few months or until they find a job.

We are made up of refugees and to neglect anyone the chance to enter a better life would not be fair.

GRADE 10 – SCALE POINT 2

DEAR BRIAN,

APRÈS AVOIR PRIS BEAUCOUP DE TEMPS SUR LE SUJET, J'AI TROUVÉ QU'EN CE CAS, IL SERA MIEUX D'ENVOYER L'AIDE AUX REFUGIES DANS LEUR PAYS.

LE DANGER N'EST PAS SI GRAVE QU'ON A PENSER ET VRAIMENT, M. MULRONY, LE BUDGET, QUI ÉTAIT DONNÉ UN JOUR EN AVANCE N'A PAS ASSEZ DE FONDS POUR RETABLISSER CE GROUPE DE REFUGIES. EN PRENNANT EN CONSIDERATION TOUT CETTE INFORMATION; J'ESPÈRE QUE TU SUIVERA MON PLAN ET DIRIGE 2 MILLIONS PIASTRES DANS LEUR DIRECTION GENERALE.

GRADE 10 – SCALE POINT 3

Honorable Prime Minister Brian Mulrooney

Sir, I have proposed an idea regarding the issue of the refugees. I feel it would not only benefit them but also our county to let them come and settle here. It would give them a safe place to live free of war and persecution. It would allow them to start a new life over in our humble country.

I think it would benefit our county in many ways. It would increase business because more employment is needed. They would strengthen our economy. They could also strengthen our army in case of warfare. The refugees would also contribute to our multi-cultural country we have today. They would create a more peaceful feeling here. They would also offer education on their heritage and background. All in all, I feel the bringing of the refugees into our county would do nothing but benefit them and our country in various ways.

Yours sincerely

GRADE 10 – SCALE POINT 4

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